

## **News from Ed Markey**

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LIST OF DOCUMENTED BRAIN INJURIES ON THRILL RIDES TRIPLES**

### **LAWMAKER POSTS 58 CASES, STATE-BY-STATE, RIDE-BY- RIDE, AND RENEWS REQUEST THAT INDUSTRY ADOPT NATIONAL G-FORCE STANDARDS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. --**

Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today released an inventory of brain trauma cases associated with rides on roller coasters and other thrill rides, a problem that he has previously urged the theme park industry to address by placing limits on the gravitational forces ("g-forces") associated with some poorly designed or overly powerful roller coasters. The list more than triples the number of known cases of this type, where the injury to the brain occurs simply from the motion of the ride, not from any direct trauma, accident, or operator error. Eight cases were fatal, all of them occurring since 1992.

"This is a rapidly growing problem that will soar out of control if the industry does not wake up to its responsibility to the riding public," said Markey. "The average roller coaster riders are not graduates of astronaut training like John Glenn or Sally Ride, and they surely should not be placed in a situation where the forces of the ride test the limits of human endurance."

The latest inventory includes 58 cases, 22 published in the medical literature and 36 unpublished cases. Previously, Rep. Markey had released a list of 15 cases culled from the medical literature by the National Institutes of Neurological Disease and Stroke (NINDS.) At that time, Rep. Markey noted that 14 of the 15 cases had occurred in the 1990's, which he noted coincided with a building boom in the roller coaster industry that was leading to a sharp increase in the average speed and force designed into the rides. Today's updated list reveals a similar pattern, with 51 out of 58 cases, or 88 percent, occurring since 1990.

In the United States, 10 cases have occurred in California, 5 in Florida, 4 in Nevada, 4 in Ohio, 6 in Pennsylvania, 6 in Texas, 3 in Virginia, 2 in New Jersey, and 1 each in Colorado, Missouri, Tennessee, and Washington. The balance is international cases.

"The industry is playing a very dangerous game if it pretends that all is well on some of these rides," Markey continued. "We need tough, tight, enforceable g-force standards, and we need them now."

Markey's call for g-force standards may be answered first by the state of New Jersey, which is reportedly ready to publish proposed g-force limits on rides in that state.

The full Inventory of Inertial Brain Trauma Cases Associated With Amusement Park Rides, as well as

other information regarding safety on amusement park rides, can be found at [www.house.gov/Markey](http://www.house.gov/Markey).

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